

of section 455 and § 1.455-1, any taxpayer who, for taxable years beginning before January 1, 1958, has reported prepaid subscription income for income tax purposes under an established and consistent method or practice of deferring such income may continue to report such income in accordance with such method or practice for all subsequent taxable years to which section 455 applies without making an election under section 455.

[T.D. 6591, 27 FR 1799, Feb. 27, 1962]

§ 1.455-6 Time and manner of making election.

(a) *Election without consent.* (1) A taxpayer may, without consent, elect to treat prepaid subscription income of a trade or business under section 455 for the first taxable year—

(i) Which begins after December 31, 1957, and

(ii) In which there is received prepaid subscription income from the trade or business for which the election is made. Such an election shall be made not later than the time prescribed by law for filing the income tax return for such year (including extensions thereof), and shall be made by means of a statement attached to such return.

(2) The statement shall indicate that the taxpayer is electing to apply the provisions of section 455 to his trade or business, and shall contain the following information:

(i) The name and a description of the taxpayer's trade or business to which the election is to apply;

(ii) The method of accounting used in such trade or business;

(iii) The total amount of prepaid subscription income from such trade or business for the taxable year;

(iv) The period or periods over which the liability of the taxpayer to furnish or deliver a newspaper, magazine, or other periodical extends;

(v) The amount of prepaid subscription income applicable to each such period; and

(vi) A description of the method used in allocating the prepaid subscription income to each such period.

In any case in which prepaid subscription income is received from more than one trade or business, the statement

shall set forth the required information with respect to each trade or business subject to the election.

(3) See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the statement if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid subscription income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(b) *Election with consent.* A taxpayer may, with the consent of the Commissioner, elect at any time to apply the provisions of section 455 to any trade or business in which it receives prepaid subscription income. The request for such consent shall be in writing, signed by the taxpayer or its authorized representative, and shall be addressed to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Attention: T:R:C, Washington, D.C. 20224. The request must be filed on or before the later of the following dates:

(1) 90 days after the beginning of the first taxable year to which the election is to apply or

(2) May 28, 1962, and must contain the information described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the request if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid subscription income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(c) *"Within 12 months" election.* (1) A taxpayer who elects to apply the provisions of section 455 to any trade or business may also elect to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt (as described in section 455(d)(3) and paragraph (c) of § 1.455-5) the entire amount of any prepaid subscription income from such trade or business if the liability from which it arose is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt. Any such election is binding for the first taxable year for which it is effective and for all subsequent taxable years, unless the taxpayer secures permission from the Commissioner to treat such income differently. Application to revoke or change a "within 12

months" election shall be made in accordance with the provisions of section 446(e) and the regulations thereunder.

(2) The "within 12 months" election shall be made by including in the statement required by paragraph (a) of this section or the request described in paragraph (b) of this section, whichever is applicable, a declaration that the taxpayer elects to include such income in gross income in the taxable year of receipt, and the amount of such income. If the taxpayer is engaged in more than one trade or business for which the election under section 455 is made, it must include, in such statement or request, a declaration for each trade or business for which it makes the "within 12 months" election. See also paragraph (e) of § 1.455-2.

(3) If the taxpayer does not make the "within 12 months" election for its trade or business at the time prescribed for making the election to include prepaid subscription income in gross income for the taxable years during which its liability to furnish or deliver a newspaper, magazine, or other periodical exists for such trade or business, but later wishes to make such election, it must apply for permission from the Commissioner. Such application shall be made in accordance with the provisions of section 446(e) and the regulations thereunder.

[T.D. 6591, 27 FR 1799, Feb. 27, 1962]

§ 1.456-1 Treatment of prepaid dues income.

Effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1960, a taxpayer which is a membership organization (as described in paragraph (c) of § 1.456-5) and which receives prepaid dues income as described in paragraph (a) of § 1.456-5 in connection with its trade or business of rendering services or making available membership privileges may elect under section 456 to include such income in gross income ratably over the taxable years during which its liability (as described in paragraph (b) of § 1.456-5) to render such services or extend such privileges exists, if such liability does not extend over a period of time in excess of 36 months. If the taxpayer does not elect to treat prepaid dues income under section 456, or if such income may not be reported under

section 456, as for example, where the income relates to a liability to render services or make available membership privileges which extends beyond 36 months, then such income is includible in gross income for the taxable year in which it is received (as described in paragraph (d) of § 1.456-5).

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16394, Nov. 30, 1967]

§ 1.456-2 Scope of election under section 456.

(a) An election made under section 456 and § 1.456-6, shall be applicable to all prepaid dues income received in connection with the trade or business for which the election is made. However, the taxpayer may further elect to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of any prepaid dues income attributable to a liability extending beyond the close of the taxable year but ending within 12 months after the date of receipt, hereinafter referred to as the "within 12 months" election.

(b) If the taxpayer is engaged in more than one trade or business in connection with which prepaid dues income is received, a separate election may be made under section 456 with respect to each such trade or business. In addition, a taxpayer may make a separate "within 12 months" election for each separate trade or business for which it has made an election under section 456.

(c) A section 456 election and a "within 12 months" election shall be binding for the first taxable year for which the election is made and for all subsequent taxable years, unless the taxpayer secures the consent of the Commissioner to the revocation of either election. In order to secure the Commissioner's consent to the revocation of the section 456 election or the "within 12 months" election, an application must be filed with the Commissioner in accordance with section 446(e) and the regulations thereunder. However, an application for consent to revoke the section 456 election or the "within 12 months" election in the case of all taxable years which end before November 30, 1967 must be filed on or before February 28, 1968. For purposes of Subtitle A of the Code, the computation of taxable income under an election made under section 456 or

under the “within 12 months” election shall be treated as a method of accounting. For adjustments required by changes in method of accounting, see section 481 and the regulations thereunder.

(d) Except as provided in section 456(d) and § 1.456-7, an election made under section 456 shall not apply to any prepaid dues income received before the first taxable year to which the election applies. For example, Corporation X, a membership organization which files its income tax returns on a calendar year basis, customarily sells 3-year memberships, payable in advance. In 1961 it received \$160,000 of prepaid dues income for 3-year memberships beginning during 1961, and in 1962 it received \$185,000 of prepaid dues income for 3-year memberships beginning on January 1, 1962. In March 1962 it elected, with the consent of the Commissioner, to report its prepaid dues income under the provisions of section 456 for the year 1962 and subsequent taxable years. The \$160,000 received in 1961 from prepaid dues must be included in gross income in full in that year, and except as provided in section 456(d) and § 1.456-7, no part of such income shall be allocated to the taxable years 1962, 1963, and 1964 during which X was under a liability to make available its membership privileges. The \$185,000 received in 1962 from prepaid dues income shall be allocated to the years 1962, 1963, and 1964.

(e) No election may be made under section 456 with respect to a trade or business if, in computing taxable income, the cash receipts and disbursements method (or a hybrid thereof) of accounting is used with respect to such trade or business, unless the combination of the section 456 election and the taxpayer's hybrid method of accounting does not result in a material distortion of income.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16394, Nov. 30, 1967; 32 FR 17479, Dec. 6, 1967]

§ 1.456-3 Method of allocation.

(a) Prepaid dues income for which an election has been made under section 456 shall be included in gross income over the period of time during which the liability to render services or make available membership privileges exists.

The liability to render the services or make available the membership privileges shall be deemed to exist ratably over the period of time such services are required to be rendered, or such membership privileges are required to be made available. Thus, the prepaid dues income shall be included in gross income ratably over the period of the membership contract. For example, Corporation X, a membership organization, which files its income tax returns on a calendar year basis, elects, for its taxable year beginning January 1, 1961, to report its prepaid dues income in accordance with the provisions of section 456. On March 31, 1961, it sells a 2-year membership for \$48 payable in advance, the membership to extend from May 1, 1961, to April 30, 1963. X shall include in its gross income for the taxable year 1961 $\frac{3}{12}$ of the \$48, or \$12, and for the taxable year 1962 $\frac{9}{12}$ of the \$48, or \$36, and for the taxable year 1963 $\frac{0}{12}$ of the \$48, or \$0.

(b) For purposes of determining the period or periods over which the liability of the taxpayer exists, and for purposes of allocating prepaid dues income to such periods, the taxpayer may aggregate similar transactions during the taxable year in any reasonable manner, provided the method of aggregation and allocation is consistently followed.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967]

§ 1.456-4 Cessation of liability or existence.

(a) If a taxpayer has elected to apply the provisions of section 456 to a trade or business in connection with which prepaid dues income is received, and if the taxpayer's liability to render services or make available membership privileges ends for any reason, as for example, because of the cancellation of a membership then so much of the prepaid dues income attributable to such liability as was not includible in the taxpayer's gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years shall be included in gross income for the taxable year in which such liability ends. This paragraph shall not apply to amounts includible in gross income under § 1.456-7.

(b) If a taxpayer which has elected to apply the provisions of section 456 ceases to exist, then the prepaid dues

income which was not includible in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years shall be included in the taxpayer's gross income for the taxable year in which such cessation of existence occurs. This paragraph shall not apply to amounts includible in gross income under § 1.456-7.

(c) If a taxpayer is a party to a transaction to which section 381(a) applies and the taxpayer's method of accounting with respect to prepaid dues income is used by the acquiring corporation under the provisions of section 381(c)(4), then neither the liability nor the existence of the taxpayer shall be deemed to have ended or ceased. In such cases see section 381(c)(4) and the regulations thereunder for the treatment of the portion of prepaid dues income which was not included in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967]

§ 1.456-5 Definitions and other rules.

(a) *Prepaid dues income.* (1) The term "prepaid dues income" means any amount for membership dues includible in gross income which is received by a membership organization in connection with, and is directly attributable to, a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time which extends beyond the close of the taxable year in which such amount is received.

(2) For purposes of section 456, prepaid dues income does not include amounts received by a taxpayer in connection with sales of memberships on a prepaid basis where the taxpayer does not have the liability to furnish the services or make available the membership privileges. For example, where a taxpayer has a contract with several membership organizations to sell memberships in such organizations and retains a portion of the amounts received from the sale of such memberships and remits the balance to the membership organizations, the amounts retained by such taxpayer represent commissions and do not constitute prepaid dues income for purposes of section 456.

(b) *Liability.* The term "liability" means a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of

time which does not exceed 36 months. Thus, if during the taxable year a taxpayer sells memberships for more than 36 months and also memberships for 36 months or less, section 456 does not apply to the income from the sale of memberships for more than 36 months. For the purpose of determining the duration of a liability, a bona fide renewal of a membership shall not be considered to be a part of the existing membership.

(c) *Membership organization.* (1) The term "membership organization" means a corporation, association, federation, or other similar organization meeting the following requirements:

(i) It is organized without capital stock of any kind.

(ii) Its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract expressly prohibits the distribution of any part of the net earnings directly or indirectly, in money, property, or services, to any member, and

(iii) No part of the net earnings of which is in fact distributed to any member either directly or indirectly, in money, property, or services.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph an increase in services or reduction in dues to all members shall generally not be considered distributions of net earnings.

(3) If a corporation, association, federation, or other similar organization subsequent to the time it elects to report its prepaid dues income in accordance with the provisions of section 456, (i) issues any kind of capital stock either to any member or nonmember, (ii) amends its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract to permit distributions of its net earnings to any member or, (iii) in fact, distributes any part of its net earnings either in money, property, or services to any member, then immediately after such event the organization shall not be considered a membership organization within the meaning of section 456(e)(3).

(d) *Receipt of prepaid dues income.* For purposes of section 456, prepaid dues income shall be treated as received during the taxable year for which it is includible in gross income under section

451, relating to the general rule for taxable year of inclusion, without regard to section 456.

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967]

§ 1.456-6 Time and manner of making election.

(a) *Election without consent.* A taxpayer may make an election under section 456 without the consent of the Commissioner for the first taxable year beginning after December 31, 1960, in which it receives prepaid dues income in the trade or business for which such election is made. The election must be made not later than the time prescribed by law for filing the income tax return for such year (including extensions thereof). The election must be made by means of a statement attached to such return. In addition, there should be attached a copy of a typical membership contract used by the organization and a copy of its charter, bylaws, or other written agreement or contract of organization or association. The statement shall indicate that the taxpayer is electing to apply the provisions of section 456 to the trade or business, and shall contain the following information:

(1) The taxpayer's name and a description of the trade or business to which the election is to apply.

(2) The method of accounting used for prepaid dues income in the trade or business during the first taxable year for which the election is to be effective and during each of 3 preceding taxable years, and if there was a change in the method of accounting for prepaid dues income during such 3-year period, a detailed explanation of such change including the adjustments necessary to prevent duplications or omissions of income.

(3) Whether any type of deferral method for prepaid dues income has been used during any of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective. Where any type of such deferral method has been used during this period, an explanation of the method and a schedule showing the amounts received in each such year and the amounts deferred to each succeeding year.

(4) A schedule with appropriate explanations showing:

(i) The total amount of prepaid dues income received in the trade or business in the first taxable year for which the election is effective and the amount of such income to be included in each taxable year in accordance with the election,

(ii) The total amount, if any, of prepayments of dues received in the first taxable year for which the election is effective which are directly attributable to a liability of the taxpayer to render services or make available membership privileges over a period of time in excess of 36 months, and

(iii) The total amount, if any, of prepaid dues income received in the trade or business in—

(a) The taxable year preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if all memberships sold by the taxpayer are for periods of 1 year or less,

(b) Each of the 2 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if any memberships are sold for periods in excess of 1 year but none are sold for periods in excess of 2 years, or

(c) Each of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective if any memberships are sold for periods in excess of 2 years.

In each case there shall be set forth the amount of such income which would have been includible in each taxable year had the election been effective for the years for which the information is required.

In any case in which prepaid dues income is received from more than one trade or business, the statement shall set forth separately the required information with respect to each trade or business for which the election is made. See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the statement if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid dues income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(b) *Election with consent.* A taxpayer may elect with the consent of the Commissioner, to apply the provisions of

section 456 to any trade or business in which it receives prepaid dues income. The request for such consent shall be in writing, signed by the taxpayer or its authorized representative, and shall be addressed to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Washington, D.C. 20224. The request must be filed on or before the later of the following dates:

(1) 90 days after the beginning of the first taxable year to which the election is to apply, or

(2) February 28, 1968 and should contain the information described in paragraph (a) of this section.

See paragraph (c) of this section for additional information required to be submitted with the request if the taxpayer also elects to include in gross income for the taxable year of receipt the entire amount of prepaid dues income attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt.

(c) *“Within 12 months” election.* (1) The “within 12 months” election shall be made by including in the statement required by paragraph (a) of this section or the request described in paragraph (b) of this section, whichever is applicable, a declaration that the taxpayer elects to include such income in gross income in the taxable year of receipt, and the amount of such income for each taxable year to which the election is to apply which has ended prior to the time such statement or request is filed. If the taxpayer is engaged in more than one trade or business for which the election under section 456 is made, it must include, in such statement or request, a declaration for each trade or business for which it wishes to make the “within 12 months” election.

(2) If the taxpayer does not make the “within 12 months” election for a trade or business at the time it makes the election under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, but later wishes to make such election, it must apply for permission from the Commissioner. Such application shall be made in accordance with the provisions of section 446(e).

[T.D. 6937, 32 FR 16395, Nov. 30, 1967; 32 FR 17479, Dec. 6, 1967]

§ 1.456-7 Transitional rule.

(a) Under section 456(d)(1), a taxpayer making an election under section 456

shall include in its gross income for the first taxable year to which the election applies and for each of the 2 succeeding taxable years not only that portion of prepaid dues income which is includible in gross income for each such taxable year under section 456(a), but also an additional amount equal to that portion of the total prepaid dues income received in each of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year to which the election applies which would have been includible in gross income for such first taxable year and such 2 succeeding taxable years had the election under section 456 been effective during such 3 preceding taxable years. In computing such additional amounts—

(1) In the case of taxpayers who did not include in gross income for the taxable year preceding the first taxable year for which the election is effective, that portion of the prepaid dues income received in such year attributable to a liability which is to end within 12 months after the date of receipt, no effect shall be given to a “within 12 months” election made under paragraph (c) of § 1.456-6, and

(2) There shall be taken into account only prepaid dues income arising from a trade or business with respect to which an election is made under section 456 and § 1.456-6.

Section 481 and the regulations thereunder shall have no application to the additional amounts includible in gross income under section 456(d) and this section, but section 481 and the regulations thereunder shall apply to prevent other amounts from being duplicated or omitted.

(b) A taxpayer who makes an election with respect to prepaid dues income, and who includes in gross income for any taxable year to which the election applies an additional amount computed under section 456(d)(1) and paragraph (a) of this section, shall be permitted under section 456(d)(2) to deduct for such taxable year and for each of the 4 succeeding taxable years an amount equal to one-fifth of such additional amount, but only to the extent that such additional amount was also included in the taxpayer's gross income for any of the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year to which such

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election applies. The taxpayer shall maintain books and records in sufficient detail to enable the district director to determine upon audit that the additional amounts were included in the taxpayer's gross income for any of the 3 taxable years preceding such first taxable year. If, however, the taxpayer ceases to exist, as described in paragraph (b) of § 1.456-4, and there is included in gross income, under such paragraph, of the year of cessation the entire portion of prepaid dues income not previously includible in gross income under section 456 for preceding taxable years (other than for amounts received prior to the first year for which an election was made), all the amounts not previously deducted under

this paragraph shall be permitted as a deduction in the year of cessation of existence.

(c) The provisions of this section may be illustrated by the following example:

Example. (1) Assume that X Corporation, a membership organization qualified to make the election under section 456, elects to report its prepaid dues income in accordance with the provisions of section 456 for its taxable year ending December 31, 1961. Assume further that X Corporation receives in the middle of each taxable year \$3,000 of prepaid dues income in connection with a liability to render services over a 3-year period beginning with the date of receipt. Under section 456(a), X Corporation will report income received in 1961 and subsequent years as follows:

Year of receipt	Total receipts	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
1961	\$3,000	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500	.....	.....	.....	.....
1962	3,000	.....	500	1,000	1,000	\$500	.....	.....	.....
1963	3,000	.....	.....	500	1,000	1,000	\$500	.....	.....
1964	3,000	.....	.....	.....	500	1,000	1,000	\$500	.....
1965	3,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	500	1,000	1,000	\$500
1966	3,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	500	1,000	1,000
1967	3,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	500	1,000
1968	3,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	500
Total reportable under section 456(a)		500	1,500	2,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000

(2) Under section 456(d) (1), X Corporation must include in its gross income for the first taxable year to which the election applies and for each of the 2 succeeding taxable years, the amounts which would have been

included in those years had the election been effective 3 years earlier. If the election had been effective in 1958, the following amounts received in 1958, 1959, and 1960 would have been reported in 1961 and subsequent years:

Year of receipt	Amount received	Years of including additional amounts		
		1961	1962	1963
1958	\$3,000	\$500	.....	.....
1959	3,000	1,000	\$500	.....
1960	3,000	1,000	1,000	\$500
Total additional amounts to be included under section 456(d)(1)	2,500	1,500	500	

(3) Having included the additional amounts as required by section 456(d) (1), and assuming such amounts were actually included in gross income in the 3 taxable years preceding the first taxable year for which the election

is effective, X Corporation is entitled to deduct under section 456(d) (2) in the year of inclusion and in each of the succeeding 4 years an amount equal to one-fifth of the amounts included, as follows:

Year of inclusion	Amount	Years of deduction						
		1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967
1961	\$2,500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	.....	.....
1962	1,500	.....	300	300	300	300	\$300	.....
1963	500	.....	.....	100	100	100	100	\$10